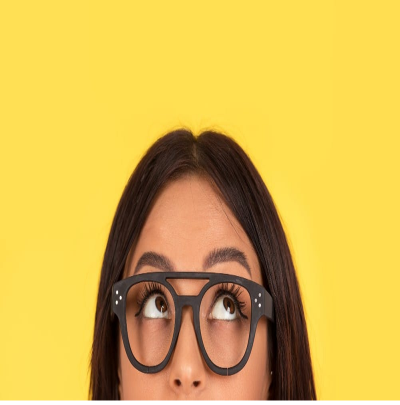

COVID Numbers Are Ramping Up: What Should Investors Do?

Description

It's known that the Omicron variant is much more transmissible compared to previous COVID-19 mutations. As a result, we're seeing COVID numbers ramp up to levels never seen before. On December 31, Ontario set a new record for new COVID-19 cases in a single day when it reported 16,713 new cases. That record would only stand for a day, as the province later reported 18,445 new cases on January 1. With active cases continuing to rise and the end of the pandemic nowhere in sight, what should investors do?

Stick to stocks that will perform well if businesses shut down

In 2020 and 2021, we saw many businesses undergo mandatory lockdown as a way of preventing further spread of the COVID-19 disease. As a result, companies that helped society move forward under remote conditions saw massive gains in value. An example of such a company is **Shopify** (TSX:SHOP)(NYSE:SHOP). It provides merchants of all sizes with a platform and all the tools necessary to operate online stores.

In 2020, widespread lockdowns enabled Shopify to see massive increases in traffic and revenue across its stores. In Q2 2020, Shopify reported a 97% year-over-year increase in revenue. It followed that performance with year-over-year increases of 96% and 94% in Q3 and Q4, respectively. If the pandemic continues on its current path, we shouldn't be surprised if the government orders widespread lockdowns once again. In that case, investors should turn to Shopify.

Another company that is set to benefit under pandemic conditions is **Docebo** (TSX:DCBO)(NASDAQ:DCBO). The company provides a cloud-based and AI-powered eLearning platform to enterprises. Using its platform, training managers can easily assign, monitor, and modify employee training programs. Remote training methods such as this have become essential for large enterprises as a result of the pandemic.

In 2020, Docebo stock saw a gain of about 400%. Although the company would be hard pressed to put up numbers like that in 2022, Docebo could still perform admirably. As more and more enterprise customers sign up to use its platform, Docebo should see an increase in its revenue. To date, companies such as **Amazon** and **Thomson Reuters** highlight the list of enterprise customers using Docebo's platform.

Dividend investors have options as well

If tech stocks aren't what you're looking for, then don't worry. There are options for you as well. **goeasy** (TSX:GSY) is another company that could perform well during a pandemic. The company provides high-interest loans to subprime borrowers and sells furniture and other home goods on a rent-to-own basis.

goeasy is an intriguing company, because it provides investors with market-beating performance and a great dividend. Since hitting its lowest point during the 2020 market crash, goeasy stock has gained more than 500%. In terms of its dividend, goeasy is listed as a Canadian Dividend Aristocrat. It has managed to increase its dividend more than 700% over the past seven years. Despite those large increases in distribution, goeasy's payout ratio is only 16%. It could continue raising its dividend at a fast rate over the coming years.

CATEGORY

1. Coronavirus
2. Investing

TICKERS GLOBAL

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2. NYSE:SHOP (Shopify Inc.)
3. TSX:DCBO (Docebo Inc.)
4. TSX:GSY (goeasy Ltd.)
5. TSX:SHOP (Shopify Inc.)

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